

appearance as he stood up "straight as a major" in the huckleberry bushes on the hot sunny hillside. He was quite fearless and soon flew down to resume feeding in the ditch of a near-by cranberry bog.

On July 22 Mr. F. D. Lyon of Halifax saw at a pond-bottom in his town another Egret which, like the three birds already noted, was plumeless.

Thus within 10 days four Egrets were noted in Plymouth County, at points rather widely separated, the North River being over 25 miles from the South Plymouth pond and over 12 miles from the Halifax pond-bottom, while this latter point is over 20 miles from the south Plymouth locality. Halifax lies eight miles inland; the South Plymouth pond is within two or three miles of the sea.

I am informed on good authority that an Egret was seen about 10 years ago at North River. Mr. Thomas W. Graves of Plymouth tells me that he also saw an Egret at Yarmouth on Cape Cod a number of years ago. This bird had the plumes.—J. A. FARLEY, *Plymouth, Mass.*

The Egret at Marshfield, Massachusetts.—The town of Marshfield is situated about thirty miles southeast of Boston bordering on Massachusetts Bay. There is a considerable stretch of salt marshes with a number of small ponds or pools scattered here and there. It is an ideal place for water birds.

On July 30, 1911, in company with Mr. Joseph A. Hagar of Marshfield and Mr. Harold D. Mitchell of Newtonville, I observed a pair of Egrets (*Herodias egretta*) feeding in one of the numerous pools on the marshes at Marshfield. We first saw them from a hill about three-quarters of a mile away. Under the cover of bushes and stone-walls we approached to within about four hundred feet, then, at times crawling flat on our stomachs, Mr. Hagar and I gained the shelter of a blind, not over two hundred feet away from the birds.

With the Egrets was a Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias herodias*) which remained perfectly motionless on the bank, while the others were nervously moving about. Comparing them with the Blue Heron, they appeared to be rather smaller; in form similar, but more slender, especially the neck. The entire plumage was pure white, the bill bright yellow, and the legs and feet black. When they saw that they were observed they became very restless and shy and kept walking up and down the bank with quick, graceful steps. One was always on watch while the other was preening its plumage or catching fish. Several times they ran quickly towards each other and with outstretched wings, and in a rather ludicrous manner, bobbed, bowed and touched their bills together. At this time we thought that we saw two or three "aigrette" plumes on the back of one of the Egrets, but of this we were not certain. They were altogether silent while we were near.

Their movements and flight were more graceful and agile than those of the Blue Heron and their snow-white plumage showed up very plainly

against the dark background. We observed the Egrets for over an hour and have no doubt of their identification. They were *not* albino Blue Herons.

After I had returned home to Jamaica Plain, Mr. Hagar wrote me a letter, dated August 13, from which I take the following: "Two days later, on August 14, I was fortunate enough to approach them (the Egrets) within one hundred and thirty feet by actual measurement, first on foot and then in a ducking boat. This time they were feeding along the bank of the river and were much less wild. The night of August 1 they changed their feeding grounds to the Scituate side of North River, about five miles north of where we first saw them. They were reported by various persons for almost a week before I saw them again. They were usually seen feeding on the marshes or perched in some large dead tree along the edge of the marsh. On August 5 I saw them late in the afternoon and for the first time heard their note, a harsh guttural 'squawk,' not unlike the note of the Black-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax nycticorax navius*).

"On August 8, while out in a dense fog on the marshes, I heard a hoarse squawk and looking up, saw the Egrets directly overhead. That day either they parted company or one was shot, for the next morning one was seen on the marshes and another (or perhaps the same one, in the former case) on the shore of a little pond seven or eight miles back from the coast. The next night they disappeared, nor have I heard of them since."

The 24th of July a local gunner told Mr. Hagar that a few days previously he had seen a pair of "White Herons" with several Great Blue Herons near the mouth of the North and South Rivers in Scituate. This would indicate that the Egrets had been in the vicinity for about a month at least.

From the 'Birds of Massachusetts,' by Howe and Allen (1901), page 45: "*Ardea egretta*. American Egret. An occasional summer visitant. Records from: Ashland, Dedham, Hudson, Ipswich, Lynn, Nantucket, North Hadley, Plymouth, Quincy, Springfield, Topsfield, Wellesley, West Brookfield, and Westford. Last record: Nantucket, one taken Sept. 23, 1890 (Auk, Vol. VII, Jan., 1891). Apr., May, Aug., Sept., Nov."

Marshfield is a new town and July a new month for their appearance, and 1890 is the latest year that I find any authentic record of Egrets in Massachusetts.—HAROLD L. BARRETT, *Jamaica Plain, Mass.*

The Black-bellied Plover in Center County, Pa.—The rarity of the Black-bellied Plover in the interior counties of Pennsylvania makes it desirable to place on record the capture of a specimen near State College, Pa., on Sept. 3, 1909. At the time of its capture the bird was in company with a small flock of Killdeers on a small hillside above a swamp. The bird is a young male and is at present in the collection of the writer.—RICHARD C. HARLOW, *State College, Pa.*

Rough-legged Hawk (*Archibuteo lagopus sancti-johannis*).— On March 25, 1911, while on Protection Island, Straits of Juan de Fuca, I picked up a dead bird of this species that had been shot by some gunner. It had not been killed more than a few days and was apparently an adult male in the light phase of plumage but was too much decomposed to prepare.— S. F. RATHBUN, *Seattle, Wash.*

Buteo platypterus Eating Minnows.—The intense and prolonged dry spell has dried, among others, the creek Rio Seco on the San Carlos estate; water being found only in two or three shallow puddles 6 or 8 feet long by half as broad and 4 inches deep, at deepest. These puddles were alive with small minnows known locally as "Guayacones."

On April 9, 1911, I shot from a tree near one of these puddles a female Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*). Upon examining her crop I was surprised to find 16 whole minnows from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, which she had just eaten. Unfortunately I did not witness the fishing process.— CHAS. T. RAMSDEN, *Guantanamo, Cuba.*

The Black-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*) **Breeding on the Coast of South Carolina.**— On May 10, 1911, while in company with Mr. J. H. Riley, who had come to South Carolina with Dr. Edgar A. Mearns and Mr. Edward J. Brown to collect topotypes of birds for the Smithsonian Institution, I took an adult female *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*, which was the first specimen I had ever seen alive. Upon examining the bird I found the lower breast and abdomen completely denuded of feathers showing that incubation was going on, but although we searched the swamp carefully for the nest we were unable to find it.

On May 12 I again visited the swamp, accompanied by a colored boy, and shot another female within one hundred yards of the spot where the first bird was taken. This bird had the lower breast and abdomen bare showing that it was incubating, and dissection proved, in both cases, that all the eggs had been laid.

Dr. Mearns accompanied me to the swamp on May 13 with the intention of hunting the greater portion of the forest critically for the nests, as well as to secure other birds of this species, but although we took two specimens of *C. americanus* we were unsuccessful in finding the other species, or its nest. The bodies of both specimens of *erythrophthalmus* are in the Smithsonian Institution, and the skins are in my collection.

Mr. Gilbert R. Rossignol, Jr., of Savannah, Georgia, writes me that Mr. F. N. Irving (also of Savannah) took a specimen of *C. erythrophthalmus* at Sand Island, Beaufort County, S. C., on April 23, 1911, which is now in my collection; also a specimen from Savannah taken April 9, 1911, by Mr. Rossignol, both of which he kindly presented to me. The capture of the two females of *Coccyzus erythrophthalmus*, by the writer near Mount Pleasant, makes the first authentic breeding record for the State.— ARTHUR T. WAYNE, *Mount Pleasant, S. C.*